

## NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD

### Heavy Use Area Protection (acre) No. 561

#### Definition

Protecting heavily used areas by establishing vegetative cover, by surfacing with suitable materials, or by installing needed structures.

#### Purpose

To stabilize urban, recreation, or facility areas frequently and intensely used by people, animals, or vehicles.

#### Conditions where Practice Applies

On urban and recreation areas or other frequently and intensely used areas, that require special treatment to protect them from erosion or other deterioration.

#### ***Federal, State, and Local Laws<sup>1</sup>***

***Design and construction activities shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations governing pollution abatement, health, and safety. The owner or operator shall be responsible for securing all required permits or approvals and for performing in accordance with such laws and regulations. NRCS employees are not to assume responsibility for procuring these permits, rights, or approvals, or for enforcing laws and regulations. NRCS may provide the landowner or operator with technical information needed to obtain the required rights or approvals to construct, operate, and maintain the practice.***

***Permits may be required from the following agencies:***

- 1. West Virginia Department of Health***
- 2. West Virginia Department of Agriculture***

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#### Planning Considerations

##### Water Quantity

1. Effects on the water budget, especially on volumes and rates of runoff, infiltration, and transpiration.

##### Water Quality

1. Effects on erosion and the movement of sediment, animal waste, and soluble and sediment-attached substances carried by runoff.
2. Effects of changes in surface and ground water caused by introduction of fertilizer for vegetated areas, and oils and chemicals associated with concrete and asphalt placement and other construction activities.
3. Effects of changes in surface water caused by the surfacing of confined animal feeding areas.

#### Design Criteria

***Field Investigation. A full investigation of the topography of the site, soil conditions, and degree and type of usage shall be made before a specific plan is prepared for the area.***

#### **Drainage and erosion control.**

Provision shall be made for surface and subsurface drainage, as needed, and for disposal of runoff without causing erosion.

**Base course.** All areas to be paved with asphalt or concrete shall have a 6-inch base course of gravel, crushed stone, or other suitable

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materials. ***The material in place may be used if it is free draining.***

Areas that support automobile traffic shall be designed for a wheel load of at least 4,000 lb.

**Surface treatment.** The thickness of an asphalt course, the kind and size of aggregate, the type of proportioning of bituminous materials, and the mixing and placing of these materials shall be in accordance with good highway practice for the expected loading.

The quality and thickness of concrete and the spacing and size of reinforcing steel shall be appropriate for the expected loading and in accordance with sound engineering practice. The minimum thickness for a gravel surface shall be 2 inches.

If other surfacing materials are used, such as cinders, wood chips, and sawdust, the minimum thickness shall be 2 inches.

**Structures.** All structures shall be designed in accordance with appropriate NRCS standards or National Engineering Handbook recommendations.

**Sprays and artificial mulches.** Sprays of asphalt, plastic, manufactured mulches, and similar materials shall be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

**Vegetative measures.** Liming, fertilizer, seeding, and sodding shall be appropriate for the planned use and in accordance with the applicable NRCS standards. If vegetation is not appropriate, other measures shall be used to prevent erosion.

## **Plans and Specifications**

Plans and specifications for heavy use area protection shall be in keeping with this standard and shall describe the requirements for applying the practice to achieve its intended purpose.

## **Operation and Maintenance**

***An operation and maintenance plan shall be developed. The operation and maintenance plan shall be provided to, and discussed with, the operator.***

***Items that should be considered in the plan are:***

- 1. Periodic inspections, at least annual.***
- 2. Maintenance of the area by mowing or chemical weed control.***
- 3. Repair of deteriorating areas.***
- 4. Repair of paved areas by replacement of lost gravel, repaving holes, regrading paving material.***
- 5. Maintenance of vegetation, where required, by fertilization, liming, or reseeding.***

<sup>1</sup>***Bold italics is information added to the National standard by West Virginia.***

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE  
CONSERVATION PRACTICE GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS**

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(acre)  
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*Any clearing and grubbing necessary to install heavy use area protection shall be done in accordance with the plans. All materials shall be disposed of by burying, burning, or removal from the site.*

*All required smoothing, grading, or leveling shall be completed prior to the start of the surfacing operations. The subgrade shall be compacted as necessary to attain a firm foundation for the surfacing materials.*

*The area shall be constructed to the line, grade, and section shown on the plans.*

*All materials shall be inspected by NRCS personnel. Materials must conform to the material specification.*

*Paving and surfacing shall conform to the practice standard for Access Road (560). Hot mix bituminous surfacing materials shall not be placed on wet subgrade. All surfacing materials shall be placed and finished to the lines and grades shown on the plans.*

*Construction operations shall be carried out in a manner such that erosion, air, and water pollution will be minimized and held within legal limits.*

*The job shall be completed in a workmanlike manner and present a finished appearance when completed.*